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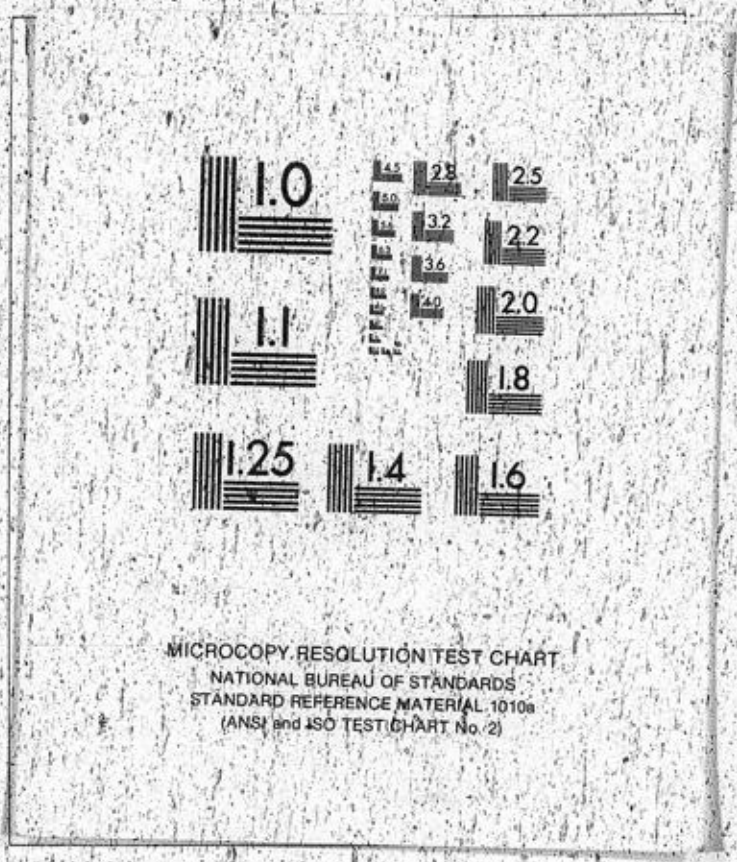

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CLOSED
UNTIL
1977

1946: INDIA (CONSTITUTION)

Mr. Rowan, India (Govt)
No. 10, Downing Street. 2

(AN 2633/63/45)

With the compliments
of the Under-Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs

Reference:—

Fo. Letter AN 1997/63/45

2nd June.

Copies also sent to:—

P.O.

Foreign Office,
2nd September, 1946

[32246—3]

AN 2633/63/45

[EN CLAIR]

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Inverchapel
NO. 5380 D. Untimed 28th August, 1946.
27th August, 1946. R. 6.25 a.m. 29th August, 1946.

My telegram No. 3695.

Following is text of Mr. Acheson's answer at press conference on 27th August to a question on Indian Executive Council.

[Begins]

State Department have of course followed with great interest the negotiations which have been going on for a political settlement in India and welcome the announcement that a representative Executive Council composed entirely of Indians will take office on September 2nd. The Viceroy and parties to be represented in Government deserve the highest commendation for patience and statesmanship which have made this important development possible. The composition of the new Council makes it clear that its members are entitled to speak on behalf of a great majority of Indian people. They have the best wishes of the United States in their efforts to effect a peaceful transition to complete freedom. It is regrettable that the Moslem League has not decided to participate but it is to be hoped that it may later find it possible to do so.

[Ends.]

India (Const)

Mr. Rowan,

Copied I.O.

No: 10

4 JUN 1946

With the Compliments of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

AN 1738/63/45

[CYPHER] DEPARTMENTAL NO. 2.

SECRET FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Inverchapel D. 9.26 p.m. 3rd June, 1946.
No. 3694

3rd June, 1946. R. 3.51 a.m. 4th June, 1946.

Repeated to Viceroy New Delhi.

Ref. My letter AN 1636/63/45 of 4 June

IMMEDIATE

Your telegram No. 5456.

When the State Department were informed of your wishes this morning, officials [1 grp. undec.] they felt their proposal had lost much of its timeliness. They feared that an announcement now would have the appearance of being designed to bring pressure on Muslim League.

2. They were later informed of the views of my adviser on Indian affairs. He pointed out policy of Muslim League would have been formulated in working Committee before any announcement by United States Government could reach India and that as Congress was also criticising proposals freely a statement by United States Government in general terms could do no harm and might do some good.

3. I have nevertheless just been informed that the decision has been taken to make no (repeat no) statement at all.

O.T.P.

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

Copied to Mr. Rowan, No. 10.

AN.1635/63/45

[CYPHER].

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 2.

SECRET FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON.

No. 5456.
3rd June 1946. D. 3.45 p.m. 3rd June 1946.

4 Jun 1946

Ref. to letter AN.1635/63/45 W: 7: 7: W: W of 1 May 27th

With the Compliments of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

MOST IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No.3485 [of 25th May: proposed statement on India].

You may certainly say that such a statement would be welcome (compare telegram to you from Viceroy No.1183-S of 28th May). If it is to be made it is most important that it should be made before 5th June (repeat 5th June) on which date Muslim League is meeting.

O.T.P.

Clauson (Home) 1 YH

6

2 June, 1946.

Confidential

My dear Henderson

The Prime Minister has seen a copy of your letter of May 31 to Clauson (AN 1635/63/45) about the possibility of the President of the United States or the Secretary of State making a statement on the position in India, and has written on it "I approve". I am sending a copy of this letter to Clauson.

T L R

J.N. Henderson, Esq.,
Foreign Office.

AN 1635/63/45.

CONFIDENTIAL

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.,

May 31st, 1946.

I think you have already had a copy of Washington telegram No. 3485 of the 25th May, indicating that State Department officials have asked whether it would be objectionable to us if the President or Secretary of State were in the near future to make a statement on the position in India similar to that made spontaneously by Mr. Acheson as recorded in Washington telegram No. 3282 of the 18th May (copied to you on the 21st May under reference AN 1570/63/45). You will notice that the present suggestion does not emanate directly from Mr. Truman or Mr. Byrnes and that it cannot be taken as certain that they would agree with the State Department's suggestion about a statement.

We have of course had earlier correspondence with Washington about the idea of a statement there on the Indian situation, the correspondence closed with Washington telegram No. 2199 of the 5th April, of which a copy was sent to you at the time; and at that stage it had been decided, the Prime Minister concurring, that a statement by the Americans would not be helpful.

As regards this fresh approach, we are quite clear that the State Department's intention is solely to be as helpful as they can. If, therefore, the India Office felt that a statement from the President or Mr. Byrnes would be helpful at the present juncture, we should certainly like to encourage the State Department to go ahead with their idea of trying the proposal out on Mr. Truman or Mr. Byrnes.

If/

M.J. Clauson, Esq.,
INDIA OFFICE.

If, on the other hand, the India Office felt some doubts about whether a statement of this kind would be helpful at the present stage or whether it might actually be risky, then we should propose to reply to our Embassy at Washington that Mr. Acheson's spontaneous statement (recorded in Washington telegram No. 3282) had been much appreciated in London and that we felt that matters might rest there unless Mr. Truman or Mr. Byrnes showed some positive desire themselves to make a statement, in which case we would willingly reconsider our attitude.

You will notice that the Embassy have asked us for urgent instructions and we shall therefore be very grateful for your comments as early as possible.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Rowan at No. 10 Downing Street.

(Signed) J.N. Henderson.

India Office,
Whitehall. 9

29th May, 1946.

Immediate

Dear Burke,

The enclosed copy of telegram No.1183-S from the Viceroy to Washington refers to Washington telegram No.3485 (Foreign Office reference A.N.1635/63/45) which I understand was copied to you by the Foreign Office.

I am sending a copy of this letter and the Viceroy's telegram to Dixon at the Foreign Office.

Yours sincerely,

J. C. Clauson

J.T.A.Burke, Esq.

SECRET

CYPHER TELEGRAM (OTP) from Viceroy to H.M.A. Washington, repeated to Secretary of State for India for Foreign Office, dated 28th May. 1946.

IMMEDIATE

1183-S.

Your telegram 3025 of May 26th. I would welcome statement by President or Secretary of State to influence publicly leaders toward acceptance of plan put forward in Delegation Statement.

(Copied to I.O.) The Private Secretary,

10, Downing Street.

11

AN 1635/63/45

[CYPHER] DEPARTMENTAL No. 2

SECRET FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Mr. Balfour
No. 3485

D. 12.18 a.m. 26th May, 1946.
R. 08.45 a.m. 26th May,

25th May, 1946.

Repeated to: Viceroy New Delhi.

27 MAY 1946

U U U U

With the Compliments of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

IMPORTANT

My telegram No. 3282.

State Department Official has enquired whether it would be disagreeable if, in the very near future, the President or Secretary of State were to make or issue a statement on the lines of that made by Acheson and reported in my telegram under reference. The suggestion emanated from officials and it cannot be regarded as certain that the President or Secretary of State would agree.

2. The purpose would of coursse be to move to the Indian leaders in the right direction.

3. May I please have your urgent instructions.

O.T.P.

Ref. F.O. Letter no.
AN 1570/63/45 of
21st May.

With the Compliments of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

12

Private Secretary

21 MAY

to 10 Downing Street.

AM 1570 63 45

[CODE]

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 2.

Copied India Office.

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Mr. Balfour.
No. 3282.
18th May, 1946.

D. 10.21 p.m. 18th May, 1946.
R. 1.22 p.m. 19th May, 1946.

Repeated to New Delhi, (Viceroy) No. 402.

Ref. My letters of April 10 and May 5 5 5

AM 1066

Dean Acheson said at a press conference on May 17th "I am asked what is the attitude of United States Government towards British plan for a Federation of India. I have not had time to examine proposals but both the long-range planning relating to announcement with regard to the immediate establishment of an all-Indian Executive Council impresses this Government favourably as constructive and states-man like step towards a solution of one of the world's most complex problems".

2. I am informed by the State Department that this was spontaneous and not related to suggestion in correspondence ending with my telegram No. 2199.

Copy sent to
S. of S. for India
Sh
27.3.46.

PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL MINUTE

SERIAL NO. M. 102/46

13

FOREIGN SECRETARY

I have seen Halifax's Nos. 1904 and 1905.

I do not like the idea of a statement by the U.S.A. on India.

It looks like a pat on the back to us from a rich uncle who sees us turning over a new leaf.

I doubt it doing any good in India with Congress while it would irritate the Moslems. It is wiser to let our colleagues play the hand.

CRA

25th March, 1946.

Joseph Lenthan

I have seen Halifax
Nos 1904 and 1905
I do not like the idea
of a Stalemate & the
U.S.A. on this
continent a part
on the back
from a rich uncle
who sees us turning
over a new leaf.
I should not any
soon in media with
Caspers that it would
visit us the moderns.
It is time to let
our colleagues play the
hand
E. M.

[CYPHER] PRISEC

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Earl of Halifax.
No. 1905.
24th March 1946.

D. 7.33 p.m. 24th March 1946.
R. 12.45 a.m. 25th March 1946.

0:0:0:0

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

My immediately preceding telegram.

Following is outline of four possible points for inclusion in a statement by the United States Government about India.

[Begins]:

1. The long standing interest of the American people in the progress of India in the direction of complete self government (or a corresponding phrase which might include such words as "sovereignty" and "independence").

2. The British Government has informed this Government regarding the basis on which it is prepared to establish a transitional representative Government in India with the greatest possible support.

3. The United States Government believes that the plan for the establishment of this interim Government is reasonable and that it will in no way prejudice fundamental issues with regard to India's permanent constitution.

4. The United States Government welcomes Mr. Attlee's sincere statement in the House of Commons on March 15th, 1946, and hopes that the whole people of India will respond to this initiative in order that India may be able to assume its full stature in world affairs.

[Ends]

O.T.P.

[CYPHER] PRISEC

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Earl of Halifax. D. 7.25 p.m. 24th March 1946.
No. 1904. R. 12.55 a.m. 25th March 1946.
24th March 1946.

0:0:0:0

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

Personal for Secretary of State from Lord Halifax.

My telegram No. 1870.

Wright and Sir F. Puckle had an informal talk on March 23rd with Henderson and others at the State Department about India. Henderson said that he was speaking with the approval of higher authority but without any formal commitment. The United States Government were much impressed by the resolute and wise endeavours which His Majesty's Government were making to push forward towards a solution in India, and warmly sympathised with the steps they were taking. If His Majesty's Government felt that some statement by the United States Government would help them the State Department would like to consider what they could say that would be of assistance. If, on the other hand, His Majesty's Government had any doubts about the value of any word from the United States Government at the present juncture, the State Department would perfectly understand and say nothing.

2. A discussion then took place on the possible points which might be included in such a statement. My immediately following telegram contains four points suggested by the State Department on which they would welcome your views. They feel that a statement could not (repeat not) go beyond this pattern, but on the wording of each point they would like to consider your suggestions and might in any case themselves wish to make modifications. They would then make a final draft in the light of them and show it to us again for your approval. They repeated that their only wish is to find words which might help His Majesty's Government.

3. The State Department naturally did not (repeat not) want to say anything which would imply the interference of the United States Government in details of the Indian problem or to become entangled in the issues of framing a future constitution. At the same time it appears to them that the essential preliminary to a dispassionate examination of the shape of the final constitution is the setting up of a transitional Government which will be de facto Indian. Their reading of the Prime Minister's statement leads them to believe that this is His Majesty's Government's view too. Hence their suggested inclusion of a reference to this matter in points (ii) and (iii). We ourselves wonder whether, in view of the obvious delicacy of negotiations with Indian parties, an expression of opinion by the United

/States

States Government on the lines of points (ii) and (iii) would really be helpful. If you so prefer, the State Department might be willing to modify or omit them but the statement would of course then be rather thin. Could you suggest alternative or additional points which might be helpful to you?

4. As regards the timing of a statement the State Department suggest for your consideration that it might be best to choose the day on which His Majesty's Government make their proposals for the establishment of interim Government known to Indian leaders or to the Indian public. In order to enable the State Department to say something on the lines of point (ii) it would be necessary for you to send Byrnes a message (not (repeat not) for publication) before the issue of the statement, giving him an outline of the basis of His Majesty's Government's proposals for a transitional representative Government. Without this it would be difficult or impossible for Byrnes to make the point.

5. Would you let me know how this looks to you? From the point of view of American opinion it would, of course, be most valuable to us to have the United States Government on record as supporting us over India.

O.T.P.